

PETER
DAVID
CHARTS



COMIC SHOP NEWS

Innovation Sees Eye to Eye to Eye With Studio Proteus on New Manga Series

Studio Proteus, the foremost manga translation studio in the US comics market, will join forces with Innovation Comics, a new player in the manga field, to produce **3X3 Eyes**, an occult-adventure comic written and illustrated by Yuzo Takada.

"We've been fascinated for some time by the popularity that manga have gained in the American comics market," Jim Elliott, director of marketing and licensing for Innovation, said. "By and large, much of the artwork in these series is beautifully rendered, and the stories are intriguing as well."

"It seemed a logical next step to try a manga translation ourselves," Elliott said. "Lacking the foreign contacts or linguistic expertise to really accomplish this, however, we contacted Toren Smith of Studio Proteus. Toren suggested **3X3 Eyes**, which suited our plans perfectly..."

3X3 Eyes presents the adventures of a teenager, Yakumo, who becomes involved with a young girl who is in reality a messenger from the spirit world. The young girl, a Tri-clops or "Three-Eyed One," bears a message from Yakumo's missing father, a researcher into the occult.

Before too long,

the young girl, Pai, uses her powers to save Yakumo from demonic attack. While Yakumo's human form survives, his soul is lost—and only by helping Pai carry out her mission can Yakumo regain his own humanity.

"I've wanted to publish **3X3**



Eyes ever since I discovered it three years ago," Toren Smith of Studio Proteus said. "I picked up the first issue in a Tokyo comic shop because the cover caught my eye, and I ended up reading the whole volume as I stood there. It had just been released and was relatively unknown then, but that sure has changed...**3X3 Eyes** sold 500,000 copies in just three weeks!"

3X3 Eyes will be published by Innovation as a series of black-and-white miniseries. Toshi Yoshida and Toren Smith will translate and adapt each issue, while Wayne Truman will provide art retouching and English-language lettering. The first five-part limited series, subtitled "Rebirth," is scheduled to begin publication in mid-June. Each issue of **3X3 Eyes** will be priced at \$2.25.

by ALEX KIRKLAND

CSN is Now Printed On Recycled Paper

In many ways, **CSN** has always been the logical choice for today's eco-friendly comics fan. They save a tree by getting as much news in 8 pages of **CSN** as 80 pages of some other publications. Now we're saving more trees by offering **Comic Shop News** on 100% recycled paper. We also will take this opportunity to remind you that this paper can be recycled again.

by WARD BATTY

Dark Horse Reveals The Big Three Publisher Corrals Star Wars, Byrne Series, Nexus

Dark Horse Comics, already firmly in place as the third of the Big Three publishers in the comic shop specialty market, announced three new series that are sure to make them one a publisher to be reckoned with in the next year. The trio of new series adds John Byrne, Steve Rude, Mike Baron, Tom Veitch, and Cam Kennedy to the growing list of major talents doing work for Dark Horse.

Dark Horse has reached an agreement to make **Star Wars** the latest in their impressive list of film-related comics; it will join Lucasfilm's **Indiana Jones**, as well as **Aliens**, **Predator**, **Terminator**, and the upcoming **Thing From Another World**. "Dark Horse's first **Star Wars** series will be a six-issue series by Tom Veitch and Cam Kennedy," Dark Horse marketing director Bob Schreck told **CSN**. "Two issues are entirely done already; once we get a little bit more in the

can, we'll add the series to our schedule. We intend to do various other **Star Wars** series afterwards. We'll do it as a series of series, rather than one ongoing book, just like we're doing with **Indiana Jones**." Dark Horse's acquisition of **Star Wars** means that there will not be a Marvel Comics **Star Wars** limited series, as was previously announced.

Dark Horse ventures into the ever-popular realm of the paranormal with a new John Byrne graphic novel, **2112**, which will lead into a 1992-release John Byrne series—or rather, the series will lead into the graphic novel that precedes it. "**2112** is a book about mutants," Schreck said. "It's a future-world comic written and drawn by John Byrne. It's Byrne's prelude to **The Next Men**, an all-new full-color series that he'll be doing for us. **Dark Horse Presents #54** presents the eight-page preview of

The Next Men series, created and illustrated by John Byrne. It ties into the **2112** graphic novel. **2112** takes place after the events recounted in the **Next Men**; this prelude takes place before the events of **2112**. So first you'll get a sneak peek of **The Next Men** in **DHP #54** in a story that takes place before the story in **2112**, then you'll jump ahead to **2112**, then we'll go back to the regular series of **The Next Men**, which takes place before **2112**. The **Next Men** series sets us up for the events of **2112**, but it is an ongoing series. **2112** is scheduled for fall release; we're tentatively scheduling **The Next Men** for early 1992."

Dark Horse also confirmed that it has completed negotiations with First Comics to make Dark Horse the new home of **Nexus**. "I'm not sure when **Nexus** will go up to speed, but we're willing to wait for Mike Baron and Steve Rude to do it,"

Schreck said. "We may only get four issues a year, but we feel that it's worth it in order to get the best." Dark Horse may also offer volumes reprinting the earlier Baron-Rude **Nexus** material.

Schreck also confirmed that a other **Indiana Jones** projects are in the works, although none have been scheduled. "We're talking with Doug Wildey about an **Indiana Jones** one-shot," he said. **CSN** will report firm release dates on all of these projects as soon as they are scheduled.

By the way, readers may wonder why **Aliens** is on the cover since that's not what the big news from Dark Horse is about this week. The answer is that **CSN** hasn't made it to where it is today by passing up opportunities to have great covers and we aren't going to start now -- even if there's no story to go with it!

by CLIFF BIGGERS



John Byrne's new series **The Next Men** leads into **2112**

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COMIC SHOP NEWS

A Comics Specialty Outlet

From:



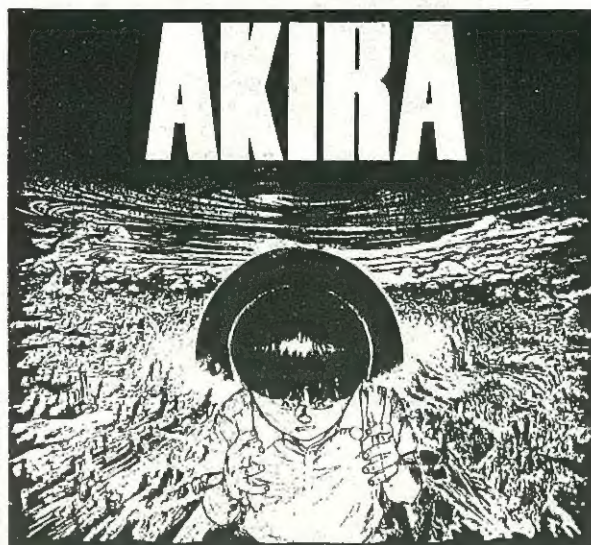
Pardon the Delay...

OMAC, the new John Byrne title cover-featured in **CSN #200**, was originally scheduled for early May release—but you've undoubtedly noticed its absence on the stands. DC has postponed the series until later this year—but they stress that it will be appearing, quite probably at a different price, so don't fret that it's been lost in comics limbo somewhere. When **OMAC** is added to the DC schedule once again, **CSN** will most certainly let you know!

Maitz Rates

Don Maitz is one of the best-known illustrators in the science fiction and fantasy field. Last year, he won the Hugo Awards for best artist and for cover of the year. His paintings have graced the works of some of the most popular authors in the sf field. Unfortunately, however, fans who wanted a collection of Maitz's outstanding paintings were faced with the frustrating task of tracking down a long-out-of-print hardcover. The absence of an inexpensive Maitz collection will be remedied in May with the release of a trade paperback edition of this hard-to-find hardcover.

First Maitz will feature 96 full-color pages featuring some of Don Maitz's best known paintings, along with commentary by the artist and sketchbook pages that show just how he creates his eye-catching paintings. **First Maitz** is priced at \$17.95.



Akira © 1991, Mushi Room Co. Ltd.

Build Your Summer Wardrobe

T-shirts are an ever-popular garment in summertime, which is why Graphitti Designs is offering four different original-design shirts this June. Their offerings include the **Akira III shirt**, with a great shot of Kaneda on his bike, features full-color Otomo artwork on a white shirt; the **Doctor Gorpon shirt**, featuring Mark Hansen's new hero soon to be featured in his own Eternity Comic, spotlights a full-color illo of Doctor Gorpon on a white shirt; the **Rocketeer IV shirt**, with an exclusive new Dave Stevens illo, is printed on a white heavyweight cotton shirt; and the **Sandman shirt**, featuring a multi-colored Kelley Jones design on a black cotton shirt. Each shirt is priced at \$13.95; be sure to let the folks at your local comic shop know that you're interested!



Here's A Book Worth Anxiously Awaiting...

"What **Fly In My Eye** does for horror, **Anxiety Times** does for modern angst." And with that provocative tag-line, Eclipse introduces the premiere volume of their latest semi-annual anthology series, a 128-page book that "celebrates the Nineties as 'the Age of Anxiety.'"

So what can we tell you that'll make you anxious to see this collection? Well, we can tell you that it features Don McGregor and Gene Colan's first new Ragamuffins story in seven years; that Scott McLeod offers a new story, "Learning Ropes"; and that Gilbert Hernandez illustrates Nicole Panter's short stories "Retablo" and "Li'l Lonely Baby." We can also tell you that these are only a few of the stories featured in this \$12.95 black and white collection. If you want to know any more, though, you'll have to check it out when **Anxiety Times #1** appears in June...



News Flash

Wanna help save the Flash? We're not talking about a dramatic superhero rescue here—we're talking about an effort to guarantee continued television life for CBS' **Flash** series, which hasn't exactly been at the top of the ratings. According to Bruce Webster, who sent

word to us that the series might be in jeopardy, **The Flash** finished 78th for all television series last year—and many shows that finished better than that have already been cancelled. CBS is very pleased with the show's demographics, which is the only thing saving it so far. If you're interested in having **The Flash**

back for another year of action, you might want to drop a line to Jeff Sagansky, President, CBS Entertainment, 7800 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles CA 90036—or you can call CBS at (212) 975-4321. "If you fail to take a few minutes to help the Flash," Webster said, "he won't be around next year!"



Three Terminators, One Volume

Following its tradition of collecting hit limited series into single-volume trade paperbacks, Dark Horse has scheduled a **Terminator Trade Paperback** for June release. This 112-page trade paperback follows a small band of soldiers who return to the past—with three new Terminators in hot pursuit! John Arcudi, Chris Warner, and Paul Guinan supply the interiors, while John Bolton offers an all-new cover painting. The **Terminator TPB** will be priced at \$12.95.

One-Shot Pictures US Caught Between Iraq and a Hard Place...

The war with Iraq is over in reality, but in the universe of Mindgame Comics' **Baghdad Triumphant**, events took a slightly different turn. In this series written by Ted Alexander and illustrated by David P. Erlich, the war begins anew in 1993—and in this series, Saddam Hussein has enlisted the help of many Arab and Third World countries that refused to take part in the 1990-91 conflict.

"I brought [**Baghdad Triumphant**] to several publishers before bringing it home to Mindgame... As it turns out, all of the other people that I approached seemed a little scared to publish it." Alex Newman, Mindgame publisher, said, "Frankly, I'm a little scared, too.... I'm afraid someone is going to take this the wrong way. But anyone who says that **Baghdad Triumphant** is just a piece of wartime propaganda hasn't read the book..."

In **Baghdad Triumphant**, Hussein manages to bring the war home to US soil—but so many American troops are stationed overseas that the US isn't ready for a home front battle. That's when Captain Independence, a superhero from the Vietnam era, returns to help defend his country. **Baghdad Triumphant**, a June release from Mindgame, is priced at \$2.50.



Terminator © 1991

Bill & Ted's Marvel-ous Adventure

Bill & Ted, the bodacious duo, are returning to the big screen this summer in **Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure II**; at the same time, they'll make a sojourn into the realm of comic books courtesy of Marvel. Evan Dorkin and Stephen DeStafano are adapting the second film in a 64-page \$2 special set for July 5th release. This new adventure takes the way cool pair straight to hell, thanks in large part to their evil clones from the future. It's up to Bill & Ted to figure out a way to escape from the afterlife and defeat the clones. In August, Marvel will unveil their ongoing **Bill & Ted** regular monthly series, produced by the same creative team. Each issue of this ongoing comic will be priced at \$1.



COMIC SHOP NEWS

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The Vampire Role Playing Game Steps Into the Light

White Wolf Games is about to put a drain on other role-playing games. **The Vampire Role Playing Game** is the first game in a new interconnected series of games from the fine folks at **White Wolf**. **The Vampire Role-Playing Game** allows the player to assume the role of a blood-sucking creature of the night, so that he may endure all of the fun and agonies of being dead. This new game stretches the boundaries of the role-playing idea by placing the player in the role of the feared undead monster.

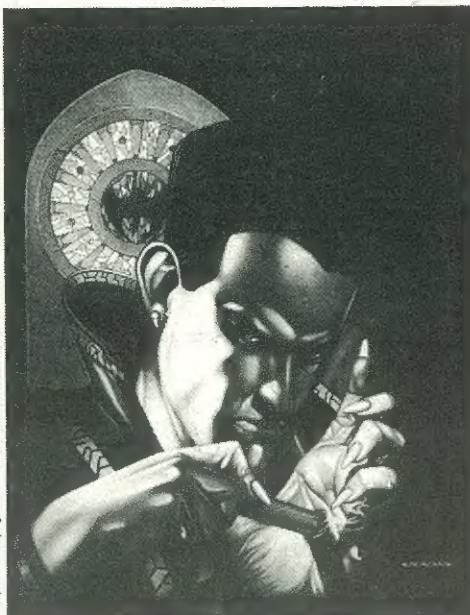
The **Vampire** game will provide over 20 archetypes for the player to choose from in creating his own supernatural creature, as well as detailing the vampire's powers and abilities. **The Vampire Role Playing Game** will also detail the world that the vampires are forced to live in, and how that world reacts to having monsters amidst their society.

The Vampire Role-Playing Game is the first in a series of horror role-playing games from **White Wolf** by the award winning designers of **Ars Magica**, **Warhammer**, and **Shadowrun**. Each of the games will stand fully on its own, or combine to create a much larger overall gaming world. **The Vampire Role-Playing Game** is priced at \$19.95.

Being released in conjunction with the basic **Vampire** game are the first supplements for the game. **Vampire: Ashes to Ashes**, the first module for the game, centers on the confrontation between a newly risen vampire and a

religious cult that seems to have created the vampire. **Vampire: Ashes to Ashes** is \$9.95.

The other supplement being released is the **Vampire Referee Screen**. This is a complete storyteller's screen that contains all of the important tables for quick reference; it also contains a dozen deluxe character sheets for the players use. **The Vampire Referee Screen** is priced at \$7.95.



Vampire Role-Playing Game © 1991 White Wolf Games

Hard To Pronounce, But Fun To Play

In a complicated world, **Sutton Hoo Games** has decided to release a new fantasy role-playing system that is bound to cause some attention. **The Hahlmabrea Role-Playing Game** is one of the hardest to pronounce game on the market, but it offers a world of role-playing possibilities. This game offers a complete combat system with socially imposed rules, a linguistically-based, free-form magic system, a variety of races to choose from, and no set character classes to limit the player. One of the most interesting aspects of this game is the fact that the game master is not limited either—he actually gets to participate. The basic boxed set for **Hahlmabrea** is set for a June release at \$17.95. Being released simultaneously with the basic set are three adventure modules especially designed for the game: **The Council of Hahlmabrea**, which details the governmental factions of Hahlmabrea; **The Dark Labyrinth**, which takes the players through a twisting maze; and **The Trouble with Friends**, the first in a series of "side-lines" modules that contain several short adventures. The prices of the modules range from \$8.95 to \$11.95.

A Game That's Rich with Adventure

If your idea of fantasy adventure sometimes takes the form of a boardgame, than **Task Force Games** has something that you'll be interested in—this June, **Task Force** is releasing the **King's Bounty Boardgame**. This new game for one to eight players transports you to the magical world of Rhan, where you must travel the land in search of fugitives with a king's ransom on their head. The boxed game comes with an illustrated rulebook, a full-color map/board, and dozens of full color game components. Just look for the cover art by Lee McLeod, and the **The King's Bounty Game** can be yours for only \$24.95.

Cthulhu Takes the Orient Express

Don't look for Agatha Christie to make an appearance, but you can expect all sorts of surprises in the new **Orient Express** boxed set from **Chaosium** for their **Call of Cthulhu** role playing game. In the adventure the intrepid—and highly endangered—adventurers travel by the legendary Simpon Orient-

Express—a series of trains that reaches from Paris to Istanbul. Along the way, the powers of the Cthulhu Mythos manifest themselves and create many challenging problems—assuming the adventurers remain both sane and alive long enough to handle the problem. **The Orient Express** is a massive boxed adventure, containing four separate books, numerous handouts, and maps—over 228 pages of material for only \$39.95.

If You've Ever Wanted a Map of Destruction...

Leading Edge Games is trying to provide every possible scenario for their **Living Steel** game, even to the extent of showing what the end of the world may look like. Well, maybe not our world, but the new **Rhand:2349--The Atlas of the Apocalypse** does provide the complete background for playing on the devastated world of Rhand, down to a list of the current population—a very short list. The set also includes a list of the special dangers and opportunities that await the intrepid adventurer on this shell of a planet, as well as a list of equipment that has survived the holocaust. Top all of this off with a 17 x 22 map and you can have it all for only \$11.95. So what are you waiting for, the end of the world?

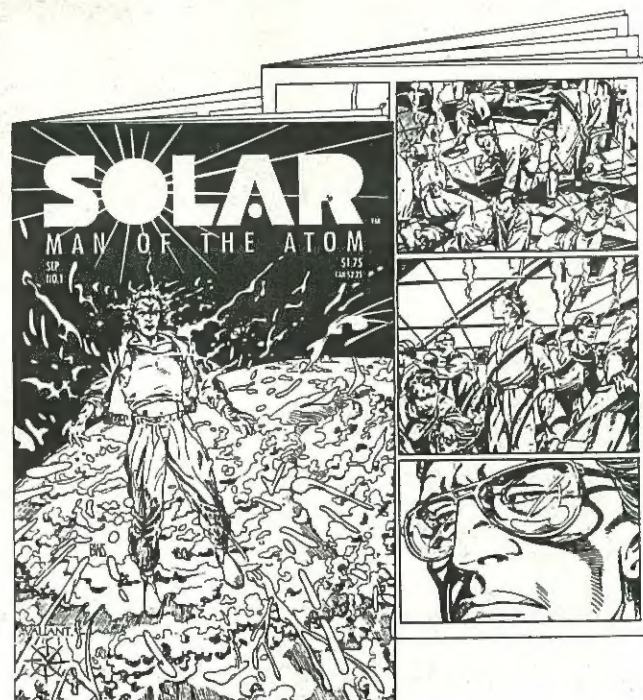
Well, if you need further coercion, than **Leading Edge** is also sending out the **Heavy Metal Power Armor Supplement**, which details dozens of different types of power armor. This \$11.95 supplement can be used for both **Living Steel** and **Phoenix Command**.

TORG Players Look For the Hard Sell

If you think that your **TORG** campaign has been too easy so far, than the people at **West End Games** are putting out something that they hope you'll think of as hard. **Operation: Hard Sell** is the new module for the **TORG** role-playing game that will pit the characters against everything from Spartans to the Yakuza. In the adventure the Storm Knights are sent to The American West Coast for a land survey, but you can bet that things get a little more complicated. **Operation: Hard Sell** is priced at \$12.00.

If you feel that you may need help in your confrontation, than you may want to pick up **The Kanawa Personal Weapons Catalog**. This 80-page supplement covers every possible type of weapon that may be needed in a **TORG** campaign. Each weapon listed comes with a complete history, description, evaluation, and statistics. **The Kanawa Personal Weapons Catalog** is priced at \$13.00.

ONE VERSION.



COLLECT THEM ALL!

SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM #1 ships in the third week of June, just in time for summer solstice. White paper, Full, painted color. \$1.75 retail. Cover by Barry Windsor-Smith. D. David Perlin, penciler; Jim Shooter, writer; Bob Layton, finisher; Kathryn Bolinger, colorist; Jade, letterer. Each of the first ten issues contains an eight-page, full-color, pull-out insert featuring one six page chapter of the origin of **SOLAR**, penciled by Barry Windsor-Smith, plus one section of the world's largest comic book panel also by Barry Windsor-Smith! — The incredible climax of the origin story.

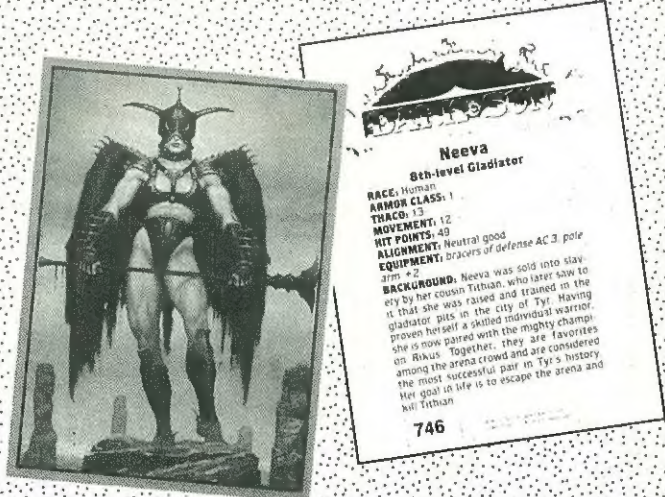
Solar, Man of the Atom, TM Western Publishing, Inc. © 1991 Western Publishing Co., and Vantage Communications Inc.

A NEW AGE OF COMICS HAS BEGUN!
VALIANT



"I'll Trade You a +4 Longsword for Your Mickey Mantel!"

The time has arrived for the gaming market to meet the collector card market. **TSR** is about to release their first **collector card** series. Each card will have a full color illustration on the front and complete statistics of the person or item on the back. The art for the cards is being done by the ace artists at **TSR**, which includes such talents as Larry Elmore, Clyde Caldwell, and Jeff Easley. Each pack of cards will contain 16 cards, and a box will have 36 packs in it. Now, if only you can figure out which one will be the rookie cards?



Just What the Keeper Ordered

If you've been having trouble maintaining order in your **Call of Cthulhu** game, then the new

Call of Cthulhu Keeper's Kit is for you! This is a handy little item that contains a 4-panel Keeper's Screen, a new adventure, several copies of the new updated character sheets, the new monster master sheets for keeping track of your favorite pests, a special **Call of Cthulhu**

sticker, a mythos book cover, a 20x27 poster of a **Call of Cthulhu** baddie, and a Miskatonic University Notepad! Whew! That's a lot of stuff for only \$14.95. The new **Keeper's Kit** is sure to be popular with **Call of Cthulhu** fans everywhere!

csn charts

TOP 50 COMICS

CSN's Top Seller charts are based on figures supplied by the two major distributors, Diamond Distribution and Capital City Distribution, as well as figures by a cross-section of comics specialty shops. The distributor's figures represent retailer orders placed on the titles, while the information from stores represents copies sold.

1. Spider-Man 11
2. Uncanny X-Men 277
3. Ghost Rider 14
4. Sleepwalker 1
5. Marvel Comics Presents 77
6. Marvel Comics Presents 78
7. Marvel Comics Presents 79
8. Amazing Spider-Man 348
9. Batman Annual 15
10. X-Factor 67
11. Silver Surfer 50
12. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 18
13. Deadly Foes of Spider-Man 2
14. Wolverine 40
15. Green Lantern: Emerald Dawn II 3
16. Predator: Big Game 2
17. Batman 463
18. Incredible Hulk 382
19. Daredevil 293
20. Punisher Armory 2
21. Guardians of the Galaxy 12
22. Punisher 49
23. Detective Comics 630
24. Superman Annual 3
25. Punisher War Journal 31
26. New Warriors 12
27. Punisher Annual 4
28. Darkhawk 4
29. Fantastic Four Annual 20
30. Web of Spider-Man 77
31. What If? 26
32. Excalibur 38
33. Spectacular Spider-Man 177
34. Fantastic Four 353
35. Captain America Annual 10
36. Daredevil Annual 7
37. Thor 433
38. Namor the Sub-Mariner 15
39. Avengers 333
40. Demon 12
41. Thor Annual 16
42. Green Lantern 13
43. Captain America 386
44. Justice League America 51
45. Superman 56
46. Justice League Europe 27
47. Give Me Liberty 4
48. Avengers West Coast 71
49. Iron Man 269
50. Magnus Robot Fighter 2

TOP DOLLAR COMICS

The following comics, graphic novels and trade paperbacks were given Top Dollar ratings based on the dollar volume of the copies sold (or are expected to sell) during the late April and May sales period.

1. Spider-Man 11
2. Ghost Rider 14
3. Predator: Big Game 2
4. Batman Annual 15
5. Uncanny X-Men 277
6. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 19
7. Marvel Comics Presents 77
8. Wolverine 40
9. Give Me Liberty 4
10. Silver Surfer 50
11. Punisher: Armory 2
12. Marvel Comics Presents 77
13. Marvel Comics Presents 78
14. Marvel Comics Presents 79
15. Black Panther: Panther's Prey 2
16. Superman Annual 3
17. Punisher Annual 4
18. Sleepwalker 1
19. Kid Eternity 2
20. Punisher War Journal 31
21. Fantastic Four Annual 20
22. X-Factor 67
23. Justice League International Quarterly 3
24. Captain America Annual 10
25. Daredevil Annual 7
26. Green Lantern: Emerald Dawn II 3
27. Thor Annual 16
28. Books of Magic 4
29. Excalibur 38
30. Amazing Spider-Man 348
31. Twilight 2
32. Batman 463
33. What If? 26
34. Spider 1
35. Incredible Hulk 382
36. Magnus Robot Fighter 2
37. Demon 12
38. Flaming Carrot 25
39. Daredevil 293
40. Vampire Lestat 10
41. Guardians of the Galaxy 12
42. Punisher 49
43. Green Arrow Annual 4
44. Detective Comics 630
45. New Warriors 12
46. Darkhawk 4
47. Mister E 1
48. Web of Spider-Man 77
49. Spectacular Spider-Man 177
50. Legion of Super-Heroes 19

TOP 10 BLACK & WHITE COMICS

1. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 35
2. Flaming Carrot 25
3. Bratpack 4
4. Venus Wars 1
5. Cages 2
6. Outlanders 28
7. Cerebus 145
8. Planet of the Apes: Urchak's Folly 3
9. Crying Freeman Part II 9
10. Usagi Yojimbo 28

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TOP TEN NON-COMICS

The Top Ten Non-Comics is based on number and not dollar value. This category includes graphic novels, hardcovers, trade paperbacks, portfolios, etc. It includes books that actually were on sale during the May sales period.

1. Overstreet Price Guide Volume 21 TPB
2. Dark Horse Presents 5th Anniversary Special
3. Marvel Handbook Master Edition 7
4. DC Who's Who 10
5. Star Trek: Mirror Universe TPB
6. Archie Americana Volume I: The 1940's
7. Ring TPB
8. Overstreet Price Guide Volume 21 HC
9. Flash Gordon Volume 2
10. Cadillacs & Dinosaurs Candy Bars

Peter David seems to be intent on working for as many comic book companies as possible, at the same time. This summer, his work will appear in Marvel's *X-Factor*, *Incredible Hulk*, and *Marvel Comics Presents* (where he and Sam Kieth are producing an eight-part Wolverine serial); in Walt Disney's *Rocketeer* Movie Adaptation; and in DC's *Star Trek* miniseries-extravaganza, *Star Trek: The Modala Imperative*. Later this year, he'll be writing stories for Harris Publications' *Creepy* and he'll be the regular writer for Disney's *Little Mermaid*. His *First Comics* series *Dreadstar* is in limbo right now following *First's* cancellation of its comics line, but with *Nexus* finding a new home at Dark Horse, there's always hope... Peter's latest *Star Trek* novel, *Vendetta*, entered the *New York Times* bestseller list at #4 position. With all this going on, it's a wonder he found time to talk to CSN at all!

You're working for virtually every company now, but let's start with Marvel's *X-Factor*, since the mutant titles are the focus of a lot of fan interest this year.

Actually, I outlast some companies!... I am taking over *X-Factor* this year, and it'll be different than what fans have been seeing in that title in the past. For one thing, it's going to have an entirely different cast of characters. Havok, Polaris, Guido, Wolfsbane, Quicksilver, and Multiple Man--not to mention Multiple Man, Multiple Man, Multiple Man, and Multiple Man--will be the new members of *X-Factor*. It's going to be a whole cast of characters whom absolutely nobody has requested to see together as a team. I think it's going to be rather intriguing...

When I first started on *The Hulk*, a lot of people said, "Oh God, why should I buy that book?" I managed to build up a fairly solid following over the years, and now I get to start all over again with *X-Factor*--although I'll be starting from a higher base.

I'm not sure what *X-Factor* fans have come to expect from the book, but I suspect that my book won't be what they're accustomed to. The events that have happened in *X-Factor* have been driven by the characterizations of the team that was essentially the original *X-Men*. Now we have this new team together for totally different reasons, a group of totally different people, it will naturally have a totally different style to it. I'm going for a slightly tongue-in-cheek *Avengers*--*Avengers* television show, that is--feel to the stories. For example, Quicksilver will come to *X-Factor* seeking aid because his powers have gone haywire due to the actions of an evil and nefarious person. He knows this because (a) his powers have gone haywire, and (b) he received a postcard. saying "Ha! Ha! I caused your powers to go haywire! Signed, an evil and nefarious person." Polaris reads this postcard and says, "What would prompt someone to do something like this?" To which Guido responds, "I blame society." This becomes the running comment; whenever someone says "Why would someone do something like this?", the answer is, "I blame society."



Incredible Hulk 384



Rocketeer Movie Adaptation

Professor X and Scott show up in my first issue, *X-Factor* #71, to try to tie *X-Factor* into the grand scheme of what the mutant books are all going to be about. I don't know how closely things are going to tie in on a month-to-month basis with *X-Men*; that's going to depend largely on how much Bob Harras [editor of the mutant titles] keeps me apprised of what's going on in the *X-Men*.

X-Factor isn't just another *X-Men* book; in the world of *X-Factor*, "It's not just an adventure, it's a job." Essentially, *X-Factor* is the government-approved group of mutants, a strike force in the same way that Delta Force is: they go to work, they come home from work, they draw paychecks.

You're also doing *Creepy* for Harris Publications, aren't you?

I'm doing some work on that series, yes. It's a limited series that I'm working on for Richard Howell, who's editing it; he asked me and I said sure, why not? It's an actual series--I believe it's seven issues long. It's going to consist of framing sequences plus individual stories. The first twelve pages are a framing device as we follow the travails and troubles of a group of characters trapped in a house that they can't get out of. The "story modules," as we call them, present different characters' experiences as they go into these rooms that put forward these scenarios, each of which is custom-tailored to them.

I'm not doing all of the *Creepy* series; I'm doing all of the first issue, then I'll be doing the framing sequences for *Creepy* #2-6, then I'll come back and do the entire final issue. I'm working with some very talented artists: Kieron Dwyer is doing the framing sequence for the first issue, and Gene Colan is doing the twelve-page story module for the first issue.

How did you end up doing Disney's *Little Mermaid*?

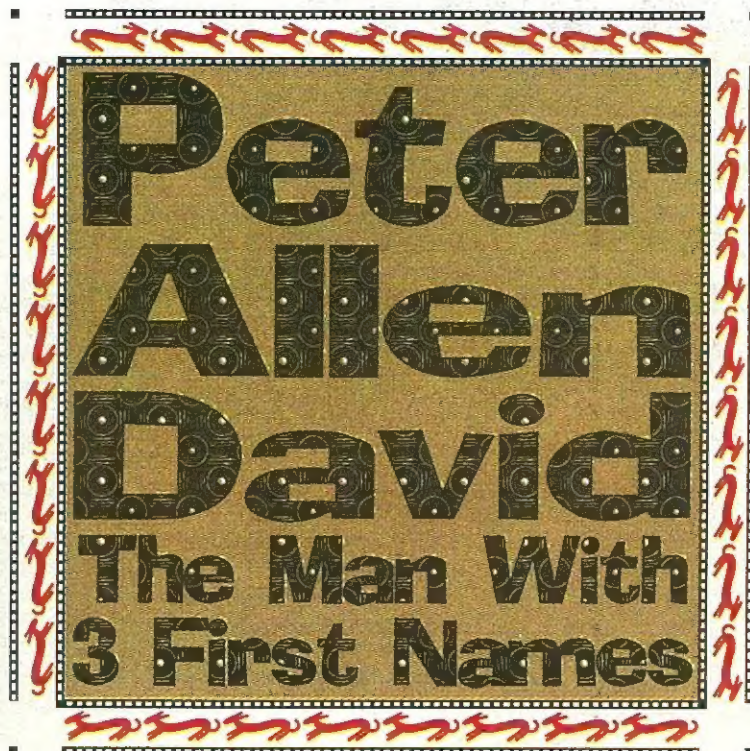
Basically, what happened there is that Dave Seidman at Disney Comics called me up and said that Len Wein had said that I expressed interest in writing a *Little Mermaid* comic should Disney ever decide to do one on a monthly basis. What I said to him was, "No, that's no exactly right. What I said to Len was 'If you guys ever do a *Little Mermaid* comic and you get anyone but me to write it, I will break both your legs.'" Dave hesitated for a moment, then said, "Oh...well, I'm going to be editing it," and I said, "Well, the same goes for you." And that's how I got the job.

This is an ongoing series set before the events of the movie. After all, the comic's called *The Little Mermaid*; if the

book is about the adventures of a young married woman who lives on land and has legs, then you leave readers wondering, "Where's the mermaid?" So we either had to have a character called *The Little Mermaid* who's not a mermaid, or we'd have to do something to undo the happy ending of the movie, which nobody wants to do. Oh, it's be easy enough to do, but nobody wants to tamper with the ending of the movie because she should get to live happily ever after. Therefore, this is going to be one big prequel--the adventures of Ariel before the events of the movie. The trade-off is that we basically can't make much use of Eric, if any--but on the other hand, we get to use Ursula. However, Ursula is going to have to remain in a sort of background position, because if Ariel goes head-to-head with her and realizes what a bitch on wheels she is beforehand, then that would preclude the events of the movie.

Since this is another underwater series, there's a chance you might see a few subtle references to *Atlantis Chronicles* here and there where it's appropriate--but you'll have to look for it, because it's not going to be obvious. I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if an in-joke didn't show up once in a while. As far as I can tell, the city in which they live is called Mermaid City, not Atlantis; I guess it's right next door to Albacore-que.

I am going to be given a great deal of latitude to introduce new characters and concepts, which pleases me. I was afraid I was going to be limited to the cast of charac-



ters that appeared in the movie, but I'm going to be allowed to introduce other undersea races and things like that.

Is this your first work for Disney, or for this type of book?

No, not really. I did a *Roger Rabbit* issue entitled "Who Framed Rick Flint?" It was essentially a take-off on *Dick Tracy*. I've also done a story or two for the *Disney Digests*--they haven't come out yet, but they're already written.

The thing is, I'm not thinking of writing *The Little Mermaid* for kids; I'm going to write it to the same audience that enjoyed the movie. If you view it as a kid's movie, then yes, to you it'll be a kid's comic. I saw the movie a whole bunch of times, though, and I thoroughly enjoyed it as an adult moviegoer. I see no reason I'm going to have to write down to my audience; I'm aware of the limitations of the comic, but I'm aware of the limitations set on every sort of story I tell. There's no reason I'm going to have to curtail my sub-

ject matter because I'm writing for little kids--I don't view it that way, though. Anyone who enjoyed the movie can enjoy *The Little Mermaid* comic book.

Are you doing any more Star Trek work for DC?

Well, I've left the regular book, but I'm doing a four-issue limited series that's the back end of an eight-issue limited series called *The Modala Imperative*. The first four issues are being written by Michael Friedman; they take place at the time of the original mission of *Star Trek*. My half of it takes place at the time of *Next Generation*, a hundred years later, and it has the first organized appearance of Spock and McCoy aboard the *Next Generation Enterprise*. We're establishing some links that haven't really existed before.

The real shocker of all this is that the Spock-McCoy appearance was the studio's idea. We had come up with three different outlines for a big crossover miniseries, all of which had been rejected; we were about ready to give up when they said, "How about you do a story in which we have Spock and McCoy on the *Next Generation Enterprise*?" We just stared at them and said, "What?!" You'd let us do that?!" We hadn't suggested anything quite like that because we didn't think they'd let it happen.

Will there be any references to the missing years of Kirk's life?

No, that's another story waiting to be told. Also, remember that this is

going to come out prior to *Star Trek VI*; we don't want to tip off anything that's going to be occurring in *Star Trek VI*. That's pretty vague, but that's all I can say right now... I will be doing the comic book adaptation of *Star Trek VI*, so I'm privy to some of the secrets of that film--although I'm not privy to all of them, because the final script hasn't been written yet.

Star Trek fans are undoubtedly also familiar with your novels. Your latest book, Vendetta, did quite well, didn't it?

Yes, it did. Most *Star Trek* books start out as high on the list as they're going to go and then drop down, because the vast bulk of the sales occur in the first week--but this is the highest and fastest that any *Trek* book has ever made it onto the charts, which is really great.

Vendetta is one of the *Star Trek* giant novels; it is, to the best of my knowledge, the longest *Star Trek* paperback novel ever written. It's at least fifty pages longer than *Metamorphosis*, the previous giant novel. Maybe one or two of the hardcovers are longer, but I'm not sure...

While we're talking about movie-related projects: How'd you end up doing the Rocketeer adaptation?

The main reason I took it on was to get to read the script. I was really interested in finding out how they were handling it. I ended up doing the comic book adaptation and the novelization as well. The trick of an

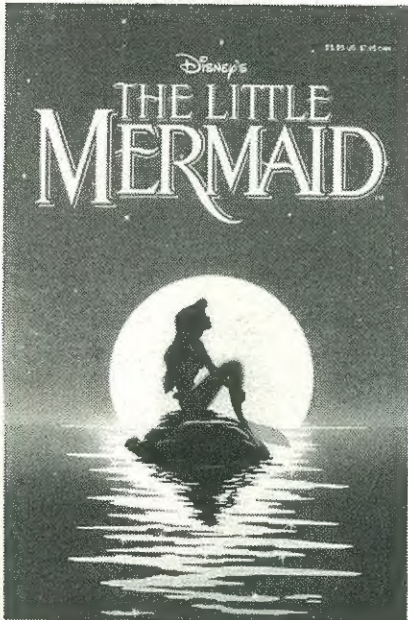
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The Little Mermaid

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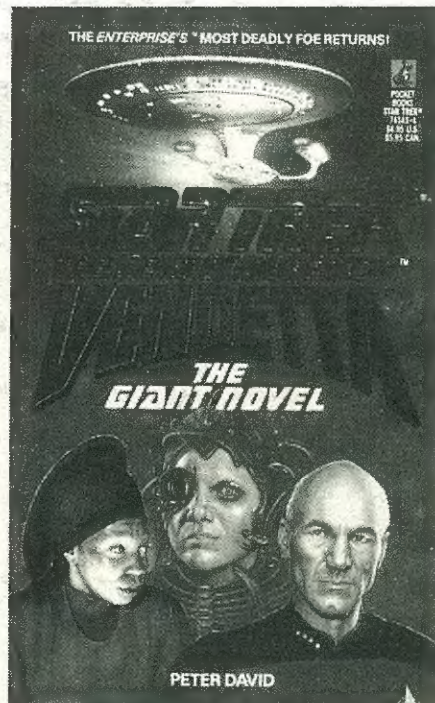
adaptation is that it's really not writing so much as it's creative typing. You have to go through the screenplay and figure out how to condense it and how to predict which things the audience will remember once they see it on the screen. When the audience buys the screenplay adaptation, they're going to want to find the things they remember from the movie; if they don't find the things they remember from the movie, then they're going to feel like something's missing.

For the *Rocketeer* comic book, I wrote the script and Russ Heath illustrated it. I think *Rocketeer* fans are going to be very pleased with it; it's very, very faithful to the character and spirit of the *Rocketeer*. Of course, there are some changes that you'd have to be brain-dead not to have anticipated: Doc Savage ain't there, Betty Page's name has been changed to Jenny--presumably for legal reasons, although the uncharitable among us might say that it was to ensure that Jennifer Connolly didn't miss her cues. But it really looks like The *Rocketeer* as he appeared in comics.

Disney has the rights to make a film sequel, and I believe they can do comic books that spin off from the movie as well, so they can

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continue doing *Rocketeer*. I'm speaking purely second-hand on this, though; the authoritative answer on that would have to come from Disney or Dave. They can also do, say, a cartoon series, which I wouldn't be surprised to see.

We haven't even mentioned *The Incredible Hulk*, the book that most fans currently associate with you.

Yeah, who would have thought? I remember a couple of years ago, when I was first starting on the book, this guy came up to me at a convention and said "I really love your stuff on Spider-Man and I want to keep reading the stuff you're writing, but are you telling me that I'll have to start buying the Hulk now?" He said it with such dismay that I've always had in the back of my mind that I had to write for this guy. He sounded so disappointed that I've wanted to keep the book interested for him, if for no one else.

The *Pantheon* story will go along for a while to come, and they've already managed to get the hulk into a kind of funky jumpsuit. He'll stay with this for a while, although I suspect

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peter david

he'll go through jumpsuits really fast. I've also told Dale Keown to ditch the boots, because the boots don't work; call me crazy, but the Hulk's gotta have bare feet. Other than that, the jumpsuit should stay for a while.

I suspect that in the future we'll have the obligatory Punisher and Ghost Rider crossovers; maybe we'll confuse everybody and have them back-to-back--or even in the same issue!

We're bringing back the Abomination in the near future, plus I'm doing a major tie-in with *The Infinity Gauntlet*. Most people who've been reading the Hulk for a while know that I don't usually tie in with the latest "flavor of the month." We tied in with one issue of Wolverine with the X-Men storyline that was going on, and with Acts of Vengeance--well, we tied in with that more or less over my dead body. I let my displeasure with the whole thing show, because I didn't think it was one of the most brilliant concepts ever created. I let my displeasure show through in the Hulk. When the Hulk asked the Grey Gargoyle, "Why are you coming after me?", and the Gargoyle answered, "Because I want revenge on Thor," the Hulk said, "Ah, I see; you're mad at Thor, so you come and beat up on me! That makes tons of sense..." It seemed like a strange concept to me. It started off fine: the villains get together and decide they're tired of being defeated by the heroes. So far, great. So what did they do? They just switch off to fight heroes unfamiliar with their powers--but of course, the villains are unfamiliar with the heroes' powers, which evens it all out. In a real Acts of Vengeance, you'd have twenty villains get together

and kill Spider-Man; then twenty villains would go get Daredevil; then you'd get about fifty villains to go after the Hulk. Now that makes sense...

The Infinity Gauntlet gives me more to work with, and I really like the people involved in its creation. Jim Starlin is a friend of mine and so is George Perez; with the two of them working on it together, it's much more entertaining, like doing something with some friends.

I also like the idea of half of the world's population disappearing. It has real potential in terms of the impact it could have on those who are left behind. We have a sequence I really adore; Rick Jones dies and comes back, and the Hulk says to him, "Rick, when you were dead, what did you see?" Rick stands there

wide-eyed and slowly says, "I saw...Elvis! And he looked great, man!... and there were all these rockers who died in plane crashes--Buddy and Ritchie and Rick--and they're all standing around this luggage carousel, and their luggage just isn't showing up, man! That's a vision of purgatory I really liked--these rockers standing around waiting for luggage that never shows up.

Anything else in the works?

Well, I have my weekly column for *Comics Buyer's Guide*--but there's nothing to say about that that I don't say in the column--a new *Star Trek* novel, and some work I'm not ready to talk about right now. Maybe next time...



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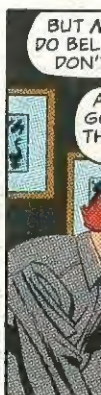
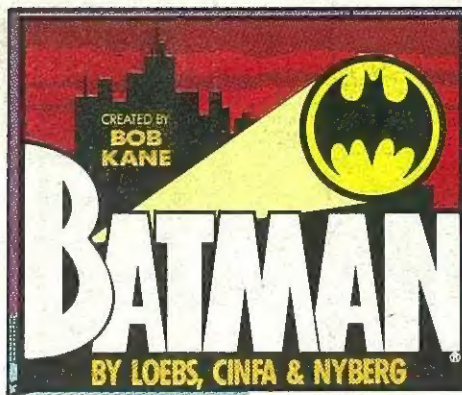


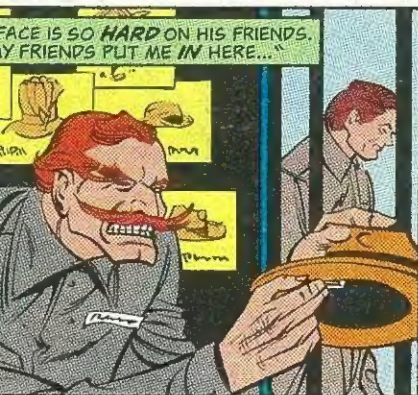
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